Once upon a time (only around 1900) where you're now standing was open land in all directions. That's one of the reasons why the nascent film industry moved to Hollywood (in the 1910's) – because land was cheap and plentiful and those movie pioneers could buy plenty of it for their studio lots. So when Hollywood High School opened, in 1903, many of the students lived on local farms and would ride to school on horseback. As the years passed and the movie industry developed a lot of the students would go on to be big stars, including Judy Garland, Lana Turner and Laurence Fishburne. Fun fact: As you look at the school you'll see the mural by Eloy Torres called “Portrait of Hollywood” – the beautiful blonde lady is Lana Turner. She was discovered when she skipped class one day to get a soda at the pharmacy on the corner of Sunset Blvd.
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**Egyptian Theater**

No one actually knows why the Egyptian Theater is designed in the Egyptian style. Probably Sid Grauman, the impresario who commissioned it, was inspired by the search for Tutankhamun’s tomb (it opened a month before Howard Carter discovered it). Nevertheless when it launched in 1922, with Douglas Fairbank’s *Robin Hood*, it was the first Hollywood premiere to be held in Hollywood itself. In those days going to the movies was a big deal – there would be fire-eaters and jugglers in the forecourt and a dancing show supported by a full orchestra before the movie began. Originally it held 1,760 patrons, but after falling into disrepair it was bought by the non-profit American Cinematheque for $1 and it’s since been restored. Fun fact: You may think that the roof doesn’t look very Egyptian and you’d be right. The theater was originally supposed to be Hispanic in design, but Grauman changed his mind after he’d already bought the tiles and like any good businessman he wasn’t going to waste his money, so they were still utilised.

**Loews Hollywood Hotel**

You’ve probably heard of the Academy Awards – a big awards ceremony held in Hollywood every year? On that day everything in Hollywood stops and all eyes are on this area – Hollywood and Highland. All the nominees and guests prepare in the rooms at the hotel here and when they are ready jump in a limousine and literally drive around the corner to the Dolby Theater. They could walk of course – but that’s not how you make an entrance! After the show they come back to the hotel for the media events and the Governor’s Ball, the after show event that everyone attends. Fun fact: the hotel is closed for the day of the Oscars, so unfortunately you won’t be able to stay there and sneak into the ceremony.
Did we mention the Academy Awards ceremony is held in Hollywood? Oh yeah… Well this is where it is held. Before the Dolby Theater (then known as the Kodak Theater) opened in 2001 the ceremony had bounced all over Los Angeles (being held in no less than nine venues). It’s perhaps not surprising that after all that moving around the Academy wanted to have their own venue for what is, after all, the biggest awards ceremony of them all. It seats an incredible 3,400 guests and has room for 75 musicians in the orchestra pit. Fun fact: if you look up at the entrance you’ll notice that it’s designed to look like a film negative. The idea was that you’d have the feeling that you’re literally walking into the movies, which is ironic now as most movies are shot on digital video.

The Chinese Theater is another one of Sid Grauman’s – and once again no one really knows why he chose this style. At least in this instance various artefacts were actually brought back from China for the façade. It opened in 1927 with the movie *The King of Kings* and that’s when they began commemorating the stars by having their footprints set in concrete. Versions of the story of how this began abound, but the official one is the Norma Talmadge (a female who was invited to the premiere) accidentally stepped on some wet concrete at the premiere and Grauman, ever the showman, insisted that the footprints should be preserved. Since then over 200 stars have been commemorated in this way – using their
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hands, feet, autographs and even a cigar (Groucho Marx). Fun fact: TCL Corporation, owner of the Chinese Theater, is actually a Chinese company – so now it really is a Chinese Theater, or a Chinese Chinese Theater...

**Hollywood Roosevelt**

Did we mention the Academy Awards... Okay we get it! Well this was the venue for the very first Ademony Awards ceremony in 1929. 250 guests were invited and the actual prize-giving took just fifteen minutes! It was more like a private industry event. The hotel itself opened in 1927 and was funded by a series of Hollywood heavyweights, including Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford and Sid Graumann. Marilyn Monroe lived here for a while, as did Montgomery Clift (if you don’t know him look him up). Fun fact: this is the oldest continuously operating hotel in Hollywood and perhaps for that reason it has the most stories of hauntings and ghost sightings of any hotel in the area. Take a look inside the lobby – it's beautifully designed in the Spanish Revival style.

**Hollywood Walk of Fame**

In the 1950’s Hollywood was becoming quite run down, so the local Chamber of Commerce came up with a scheme to give the area more lustre. Once again, like much of Hollywood history, no one knows exactly where the idea came from, but generally E. M. Stuart is given the credit. One theory is that the idea for the Walk of Fame came from the old Hollywood Hotel (on Hollywood and Highland) and the stars that decorated its ballroom ceiling. The first stars were laid down in
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1958 and within a couple of years over 1,500 had been added. The Walk stretches from Hollywood and La Brea in the west to Hollywood and Gower in the east (about two miles). Now it holds over 2,500 stars and there are unveiling ceremonies about three-four times a month. Fun fact: the stars have to pay $40,000 (at the time of writing) for the costs associated with their star.

Food

There are many places to eat in the area, here are a few suggestions:

**Hollywood Boulevard:**  
- Juicy Factory, 6708 Hollywood Blvd  
- Musso & Frank Grill, 6667 Hollywood Blvd  
- Snow White Café, 6769 Hollywood Blvd  
- 25 Degrees, 7000 Hollywood Blvd (Roosevelt Hotel)  
- Mel’s Drive-In, 1660 Highland Ave

Also check out our website for more suggestions on places to eat in Los Angeles.